

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

March 12, 2021

Variants of concern found in the area

All COVID-19 tests that come back positive are screened for variants of concern. This morning, Northwestern Health Unit (NWHU) was informed that two COVID-19 cases in our region have come back positive for the UK variant.

The two cases are unrelated to one another. One case is in the Fort Frances area and had recently returned to the area from a higher risk region. Case and contact follow up has taken place and all close contacts are in isolation. At this time, NWHU is awaiting test results from close contacts to determine the likelihood of further spread.

The other case is a previously positive case, linked to our area's first reported variant of concern in the Dryden area. No further spread from this case was seen, and the case is now considered resolved.

"This emphasizes the need for individuals and their household members to self-isolate immediately when someone has a symptom of COVID-19. Variants of concern can spread incredibly fast," says Dr. Kit Young Hoon, Medical Officer of Health at NWHU. "By only getting within 2 metres of people you live with, you are able to reduce the chance of spreading COVID-19 to others," continues Dr. Young Hoon.

NWHU urges the public to take prevention measures seriously, especially with variants of concern in the region. The health unit will keep the public informed as they learn more about potential spread of the variants.

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A reminder to the media that Dr. Kit Young Hoon hosts online COVID-19 media briefings every Tuesday, 1:30 pm CT and Friday, 10:00 am CT as well as Q&A sessions for the public every second Thursday, 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm CT. If you do not have a link to the media briefings, please email jbegg@nwhu.on.ca.